Unsuitability of Damodar river water for human consumption

246. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Damodar river water is unsuitable for human consumption and also for agricultural use according to a recent study conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what measures have been taken by Government for pollution control and for stopping violation of pollution laws by the industrial units by discharging effluents into the river; and

(d) what results achieved so far?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) Pollution from domestic wastes coupled with untreated industrial discharge has resulted in the heavy pollution of the Damodar river. The Government have already taken a number of steps for control of pollution in the Damodar basin:—

(i) Effluent and emission standards have been prescribed under the Environment (protection) Act, 1986;

(ii) Environment guidelines have been evolved for sitting and operation of industries;

(iii) Industries have been asked to comply with consent requirements of the State Pollution Control Boards to limit the discharge of effluents and emissions within the stipulated standards;

(iv) The Central Government, in consultation with the State Governments, have prepared an action plan to meet the effluent and emission standards for polluting industries;

(v) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment and also for the shifting of polluting industries from congested areas;

(vi) Network of ambient air quality and ambient water quality monitoring stations have been set up;

(vii) A scheme has been initiated to give assistance to cluster of small scale industrial units for setting up common effluent treatment plants;

(viii) A proposal has been prepared for including the cleaning up of the Damodar river in the second phase of the Ganga Action Plan. A commitment of the West Bengal Government for sharing 50% of the cost has also been received.

Ganga Action Plan

247. SHRI RAM DAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the Hindustan Times dated, 7th November 1992 captioned "Ganga water not safe for drinking";

(b) whether any review is undertaken by the Government or the central Water Pollution control Board so far in this regard if so, with what results;

(c) what remedial measures/steps taken for completion of 261 schemes under the Ganga Action Plan for the benefit of people in Kanpur, Allahabad, taken so far; and